Gettysburg

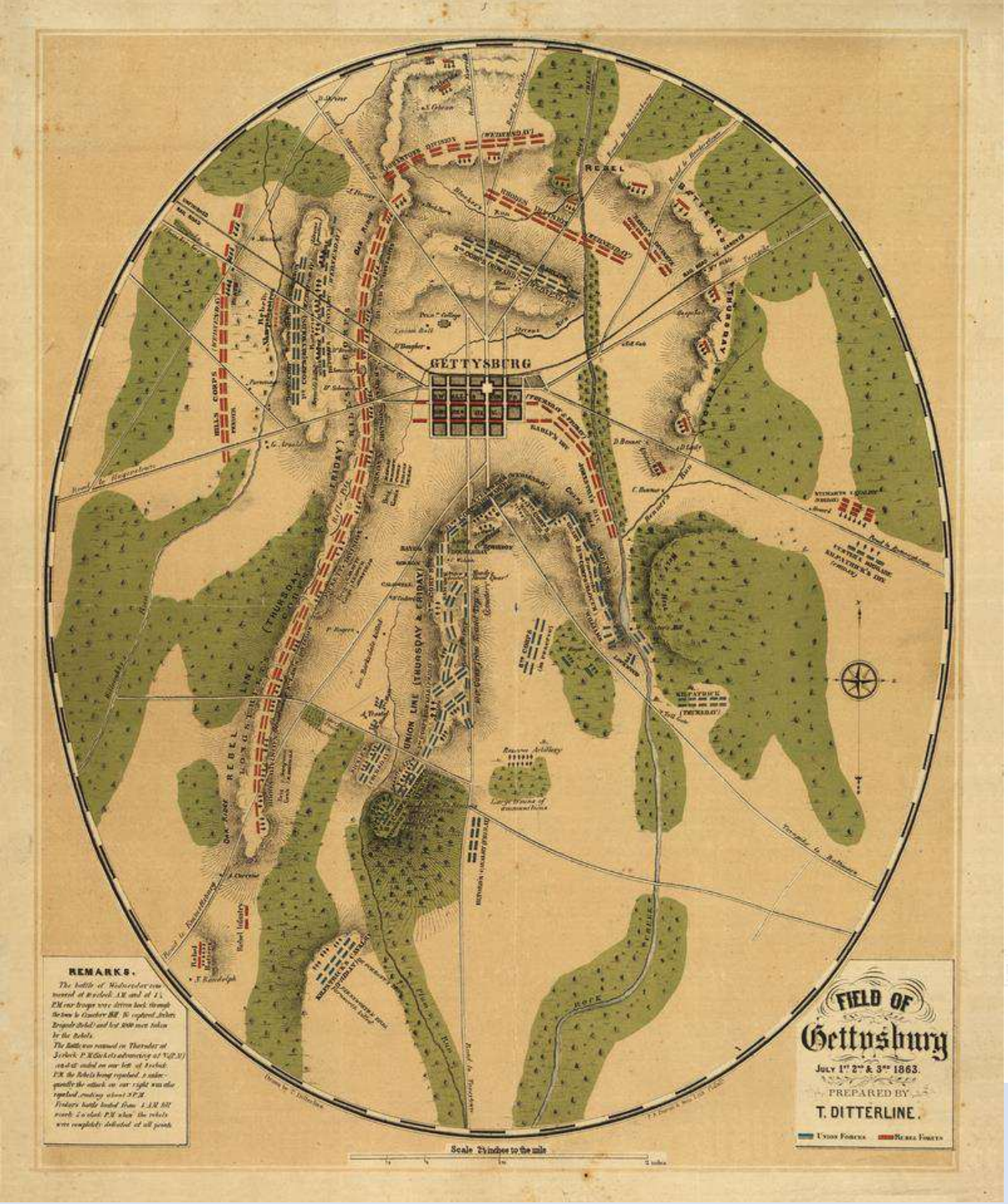
July 1 – 3, 1863

Backstory

The Confederate victory at Chancellorsville, Virginia, gave General Lee the initiative to take the fight to the Northern states hoping to take pressure off war torn Virginia. They were also looking for supplies and to disrupt the Union supply lines. If General Lee was successful, his army would be able to threaten Philadelphia, Baltimore, and even Washington D.C. He was looking to influence northern opinion to convince the Union politicians to sue for peace.

Prodded by President Lincoln, the Union Army of the Potomac commanded by General Hooker gave pursuit. The two armies would collide at Gettysburg where General Hooker would be replaced by General George Meade three days before the battle.

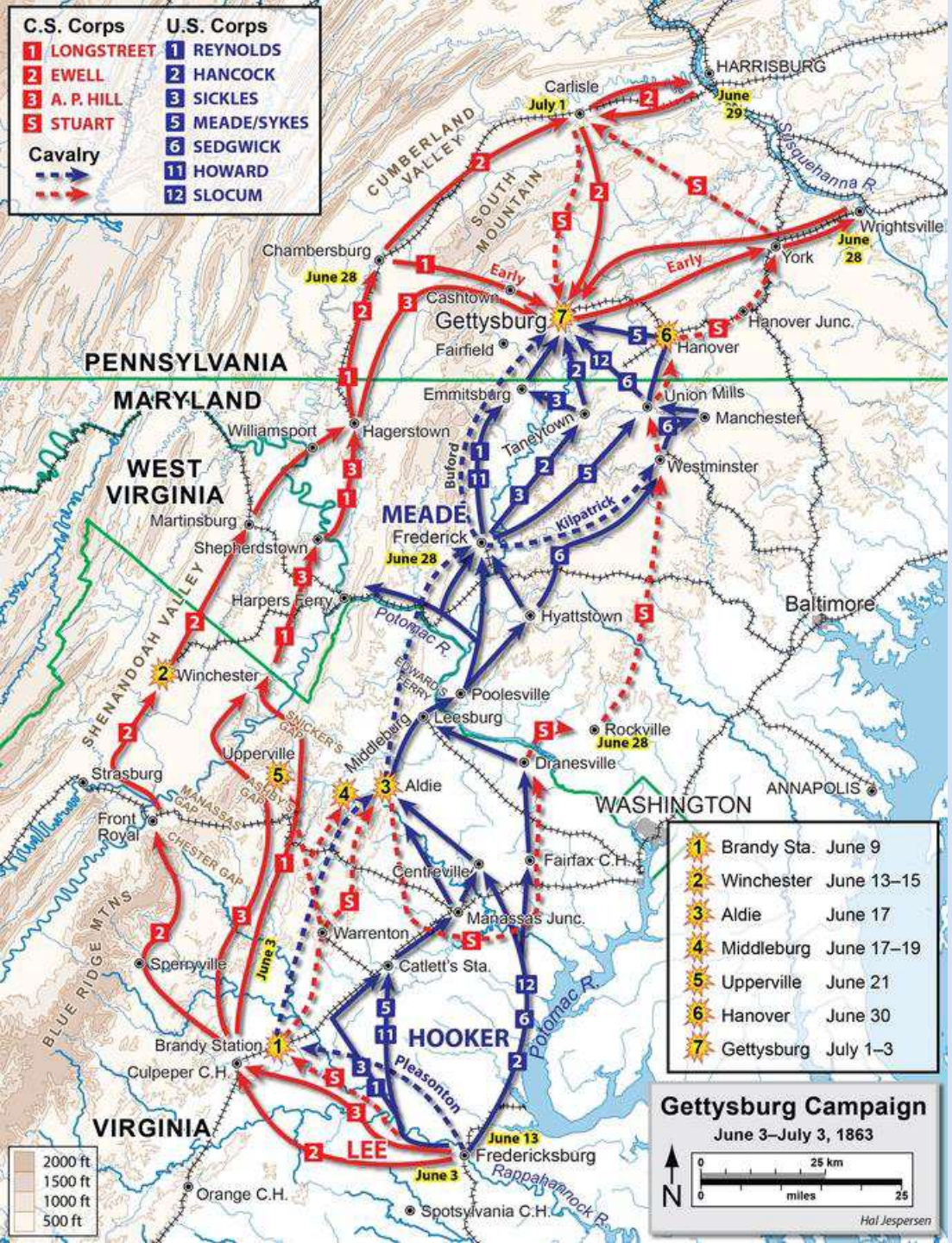
Gettysburg was the hub of ten highways leading into Pennsylvania and down toward Maryland And Virginia. It would be the battle to influence the Civil War's outcome. It would be one of the bloodiest battles over three hot summer days.



Belligerents	
United States (Union)	Confederate States
Commanders and leaders	
George Meade	Robert E. Lee
Units involved	
Army of the Potomac[2]	Army of Northern Virginia[3]
Strength	
93,500–104,256[4][5] 360 artillery pieces 36 cavalry regiments	71,000–75,000, possibly as many as 80,000.[6] 270 artillery pieces 9,500 cavalry
Casualties and losses	
23,049[7][8]	23,000–28,000[9][10]

V · T · E **Gettysburg campaign** [show]

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Gettysburg



Union and Confederate Union movements prior to and during the Gettysburg battle.

Confederate forces in Red

Union forces in Blue

Army Organization: https://gettysburg.stonesentinels.com/armies/#google_vignette

Map of the Gettysburg Campaign (up to July 3, 1863) of the American Civil War. Attribution: Map by Hal Jespersen, www.cwmaps.com

American Battlefield Trust

https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/gettysburg-animated-map

Source: https://www.thedailygopher.com/2023/7/4/23783072/sacrifice-and-the-flags-of-our-fathers-the-1st-minnesota-at-gettysburg-2023

Sacrifice and the Flags of our Fathers: The 1st Minnesota at Gettysburg

July 2, 1863

Heroism seldom occurs without a mistake, and it was no different in the early evening of July 2nd, 1863[1].

1. By Ustreet@UStreetTDG

The Outcome

Three days of fighting. Causalities on both sides totaling over 40,000 dead and wounded.

Bodies left on the battlefield hastily buried. Horses and other animals left to rote in the hot sun.

Union graves would be reinterned to the newly created Gettysburg's National Cemetery.

Confederate graves would be left up to the Southern families (i.e., wives & mothers) to form their own burial groups to bury their dead back home.

General Lee's army would retreat to the swollen Potomac River.

Lee's engineers would construct a pontoon bridge to escape back to Virginia with Lee's army intact to fight another day.

What made General Meade great at Gettysburg would work against him from destroying Lee's Army after Gettysburg. President Lincoln would accept General Meade's resignation and appoint General Ulysses Grant to lead the Union Army. General Meade would serve under General Grant for the rest of the war.

Casualties

	Union	Confederate
Killed	3155	4708
Wounded	14,531	12,693
Missing	5369	5830
Total	23,055	23,231

Unknown how many wounded died after the battle if any. I am not sure if the missing include captured or surrendered to either side.

The Battle of Gettysburg would change how deaths and burials were handled

Photography and newspapers would influence public opinion how battlefield casualties would be taken care by family and governments.

Battlefield conditions would show how armies lived, fought and died in the field.

Families would want to know how their loved ones remains were treated.

These battles would create the new National cemeteries by Congress. Gettysburg would be one.

One of the most iconic National Cemeteries (Arlington) would be created from Robert E Lee's estate.

Garry Adelman essay, American Battlefield Trust, describes how Civil War battlefields would change burials. (See link below)

Source: https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/death-burial-guideposts-gettysburgs-dead

National Park Service

The National Park Service has a website containing not only Civil War solders & sailors database but Gettysburg articles, activities, research, and pictures

National Park Service Solders & Sailors database:
https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm

Gettysburg National Park https://www.nps.gov/gett/index.htm

Gettysburg National Cemetery
https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/national_cemeteries/pennsylvania/gettysburg_national_cemetery.html

Pictures – Then and Now
https://www.nps.gov/gett/learn/photosmultimedia/then-and-now.htm

The Memorials

Gettysburg Monuments, Wikipedia - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_monuments_of_the_Gettysburg_Battlefield

Pennsylvania Gettysburg Memorials - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pennsylvania_State_Memorial,_Gettysburg

Gettysburg Foundation - https://www.gettysburgfoundation.org/soldiers-national-cemetery

Gettysburg Foundation – Finding your Ancestor: https://www.gettysburgfoundation.org/revisit-gettysburg/blog-reimagining-gettysburg/finding-your-civil-war-ancestor

The Photographs

Mathew Brady became iconic for his Civil War photographs. It was not only Brady, but his hiring of other photographers to show the public the grim realities of the war. A brief bio can be found here: https://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/mathew-brady

Because wet-plate collodion negatives required from 5 to 20 seconds exposure, there are no action photographs of the war[1].

Here are several websites where some of the Civil War photo exist:

https://www.nps.gov/gett/learn/photosmultimedia/then-and-now.htm

https://www.nps.gov/gett/learn/photosmultimedia/photogallery.htm

https://allthatsinteresting.com/battle-of-gettysburg-photos

https://www.gettyimages.com/photos/library-of-congress-gettysburg?assettype=image&sort=mostpopular&phrase=library%20of%20congress%20gettysburg&license=rf%2Crm

1. https://www.archives.gov/research/still-pictures/civil-war

Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

We all remember the introduction to the Gettysburg Address. "Four score and seven years ago…"

President Lincoln was invited to speak to the dedication of the National Cemetery at the Gettysburg's memorial. The main speaker was Edward Everett who spoke for two hours. Lincoln's speech would last approximately two minutes. 275 words and the most quoted.

However, there is more to the story. Historians have debated which copy he used. Here's the full text and copies of President Lincoln's speech: http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm

Everett would recognize the importance of Lincoln's words and later write to Lincoln. "**I should be glad," he wrote Lincoln, "if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion, in two hours, as you did in two minutes" (Everett to Lincoln, 20 Nov. 1863). Everett's speech:** https://history.hanover.edu/courses/excerpts/121everett.html

My Photos from Gettysburg National Park

In the summer of 2015, Nancy and I went to the Gettysburg National Park while visiting our daughter. This was a spur of the moment decision, and we went in the afternoon.

I will say, we didn't realize the full scope and size of the park. We should have planned a multiday experience from the Visitor's Center to touring the park grounds. If you go, you should plan for several days to fully experience what the Gettysburg National Park offers.

Some of the following photos I took are from the first day's fighting and the Eternal Light memorial.

8TH NEW YORK CAVALRY
2D BRIGADE-1ST DIVISION
CAVALRY CORPS

Trapped in the Cut

Gettysburg
National Military Park

"Surrender, or I will fire."
Lt. Col. Rufus R. Dawes, U.S.A.
6th Wisconsin Volunteers

The railroad cut visible in front of you was the scene of a dramatic engagement on the first day of the battle.

On the morning of July 1, a Confederate attack crushed the Union line here, sending the surviving Federals streaming back toward town (to your left). But shortly thereafter, Union units counterattacked, forcing a number of the Southerners to take cover in the railroad cut in front of you.

Despite deadly Confederate fire from the cut, Union infantry led by Lt. Col. Rufus R. Dawes and Col. Edward B. Fowler crossed the turnpike in front of you, climbed the fence there, and charged the cut. Although many were shot in the attempt, the charging Federals reached the edge of the cut and shouted, "Throw down your muskets!" Trapped between the steep slopes, about 230 Confederates surrendered.

The railroad cut about 1869, looking east toward Gettysburg. The photographer was standing on the opposite side of the track.

At the time of the battle the cut was new, and track had not yet been laid. According to Colonel Dawes, the field in the photo "streamed with men who had been shot."

Lt. Col. Rufus R. Dawes, U.S.A., collected an armful of swords from surrendering Confederate officers in the railroad cut. He had ordered the daring charge in which 180 of the 420 men in his regiment were shot down.

Battle flag of the 2nd Mississippi Infantry surrendered in the railroad cut.

July 1 1863
First Day

Barlow
Knoll Loop
Auto
Tour

General Rodes Attacks

Gettysburg
National Military Park

"Finding that the enemy was rash enough to come out of the woods to attack me, I determined to meet him..."

Maj. Gen. Robert E. Rodes, C.S.A.
Rodes' Division, Second Corps

At midday on July 1, after a lull in the fighting, Maj. Gen. Robert E. Rodes took position on this hill north of Gettysburg with 8,000 Confederates. Other Confederate divisions were converging on the town from your right and left. The closest Union troops were on Oak Ridge about 1/3-mile in front of you.

The thunder of Southern cannon positioned here signaled the beginning of the attack. Following the cannonade, Brig. Gen. Alfred Iverson's North Carolina Brigade advanced with other Confederates against Oak Ridge. As Iverson neared the ridge, Federals concealed behind a stone wall rose up and fired the North Carolinians with murderous effect. More than half the 1,470 Confederates engaged were killed, wounded, or captured.

Rodes then regrouped and renewed the attack, bringing more Confederate troops into battle. By 4:00 p.m., despite heavy losses, Confederates had pushed the Federals through the streets of Gettysburg.

You are standing on Oak Hill looking south over much of the field of the first day of the battle.

1 Oak Ridge
From behind the stone wall here, Union infantry commanded by Brig. Gen. Henry Baxter slaughtered Iverson's North Carolinians with musket fire.

2 Reynolds Woods/ McPherson Ridge
Scene of fierce fighting at the opening of the battle on the morning of July 1.

3 Chambersburg Pike

4 Mummasburg Road

Maj. Gen. Robert E. Rodes commanded the largest division in the Confederate army–8,000 officers and men. 2,000 of these were lost on the fields in front of you on the first day of the battle.

Infantry positions at midday, July 1, 1863. The map is oriented to the south, the direction you are facing.

Film, Cyclorama & Museum
08:15 AM
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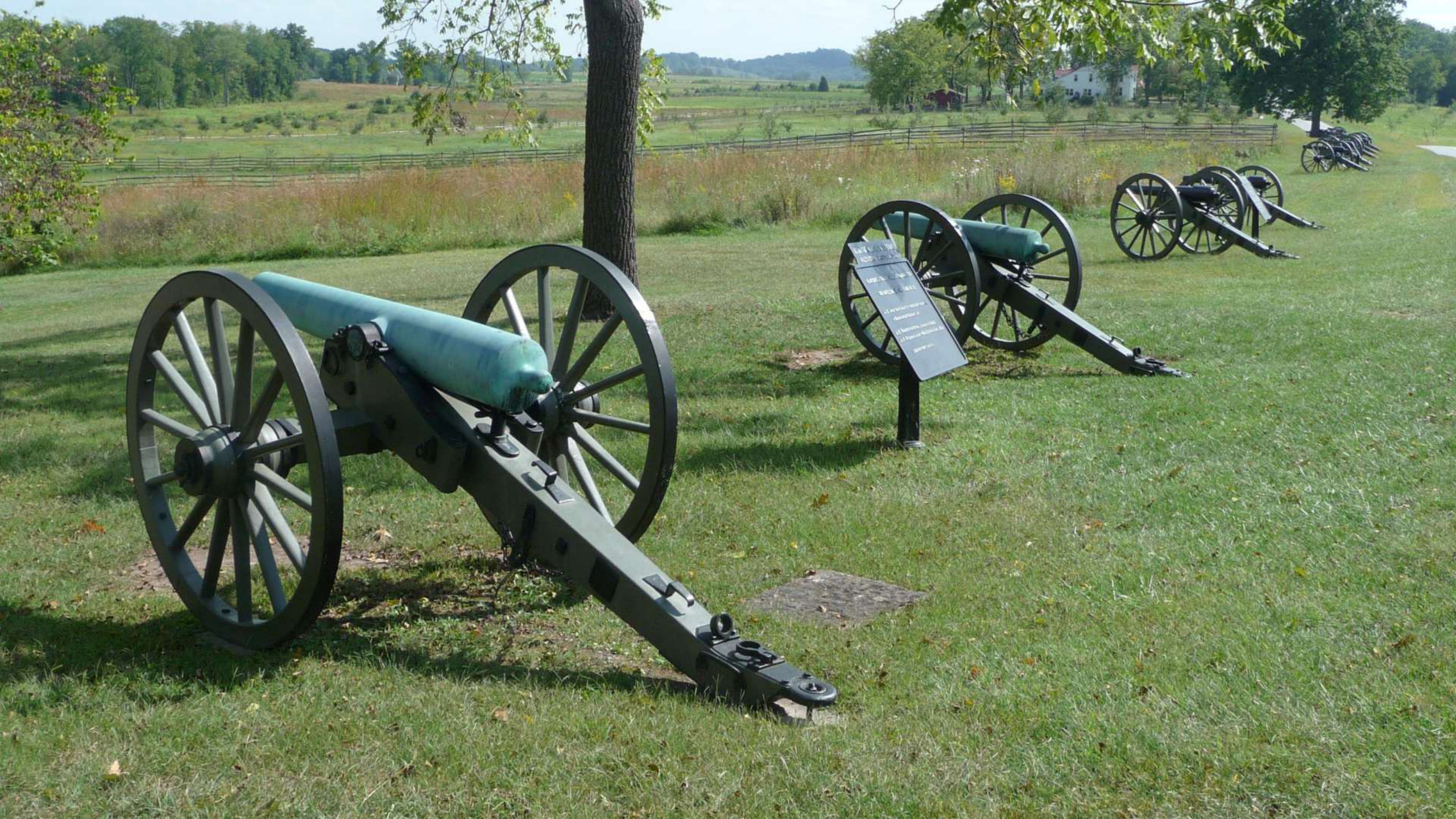
Combo Package



Other Resources

Battle of Gettysburg Eternal Light Peace Memorial: https://gettysburg.stonesentinels.com/other-monuments/eternal-light-peace-memorial/

FamilySearch – Catalog – Gettysburg: https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/results?count=20&placeId=195966&query=%2Btitle%3Agettysburg

Cyndi's List – Civil War Battles: https://www.cyndislist.com/us/civil-war/battles/?page=2

Fold3.com

Ancestry.com

MyHeritage.com

Internet Archive Gettysburg Civil War books: https://archive.org/search?query=gettysburg+Civil+war&sin=TXT

Newspapers.com: Newspapers.com

Library of Congress Chronicling America: https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/

American Battlefield trust – 10 facts: https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/10-facts-gettysburg

Albuquerque Library eBook: Gettysburg by Ian C Martin https://www.hoopladigital.com/title/12353033